



HOUSE BUDGET COMMITTEE

Democratic Caucus

The Honorable John M. Spratt Jr. ■ Ranking Democratic Member

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DoD Appropriations Rule Enables Increase In Debt Ceiling: Vote No on Rule

Dear Democratic Colleague:

Last night, we learned for the first time that Republicans want to use the rule on the Defense appropriations bill to increase the debt ceiling. Therefore, I am writing to urge you to oppose the rule. For the third time in three years, Republicans need an emergency increase in the debt limit. Last year, they enacted the largest debt limit increase in history — almost \$1 trillion (\$984 billion, to be precise). In 2002, they raised the debt limit by \$450 billion. Now, they need another \$690 billion increase to keep the federal government solvent.

Republicans propose to insert into the defense appropriations bill language affirming that the federal government puts its full faith and credit behind its bonds. There is no need to make this statement; it is already the law. The only reason to add this language is to allow a debt limit increase to emerge from a conference in a totally unrelated bill.

First, Republicans tried to use the “Hastert Rule” to produce an increase in the debt limit through their budget resolution without having to take a vote. But they could not agree among themselves on the dismal numbers in their own budget resolution. So now, they try to cloak the urgently needed debt limit increase in an unrelated must-pass bill.

The only way to force the Republican Congress and the Administration to face up to the consequences of their own actions is to defeat the rule for the defense appropriations bill. A vote for the rule is a vote to increase the debt limit — again.

Sincerely,

/s

John M. Spratt, Jr.

Ranking Democratic Member